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Thunder from the Heartland: The Great Lakes Jazz Summit opens with Midwest Saxophone Legends at The Cleveland Museum of Art

Ira Sullivan: "as 'hot' as could be, but his lines also had a porcelainlike delicacy and a rare meditative weight as though, in full flight, he still was able to mull over all that this music has meant to him through the years." *Chicago Tribune*

Von Freeman: "is Chicago jazz history...and the world discovers a legend can continue to expand at 70." *Chicago Tribune*

Ernie Krivda: "is a pulsating roaring tenorman playing on the changes with a verve that is flooring." *Downbeat*

Jazz returns to Gartner Auditorium at The Cleveland Museum of Art when Ira Sullivan, Von Freeman, and Ernie Krivda star as the *Midwest Saxophone Legends*, leading off the four-concert series **Thunder from the Heartland: The Great Lakes Jazz Summit** in a concert at 7:30 pm Friday evening, February 12. Randy Gelispie (drums), Jeff Halsey (bass), and Joe Hunter (piano) will join them for this concert featuring the music of noted jazz historian Andrew Homzy.

Thunder from the Heartland: The Great Lakes Jazz Summit is being presented by the Northeast Ohio Jazz Society (NOJS) with the cooperation of The Cleveland Museum of Art, which is hosting three of the concerts, and public radio station WCPN-FM. The series showcases the talent of Midwestern jazz musicians and composers, affirms Cleveland's prominence as a center of jazz renaissance, and marks the first time the Art Museum has programmed a jazz series or any major jazz event other than as a complement to a major special exhibition.

Museum director Evan H. Turner notes:

Like painting and sculpture, music is a way to explore feelings and ideas. The innovations of jazz composers and the artistry of jazz musicians are wonderful expressions of the energy and excitement of modern life. We're delighted to return to this music for an audience that has clearly loved it in the past, and grateful for the good fortune of collaborating with NOJS again. This spring's series of concerts will be historic for the Museum, and provide rich listening for its enthusiasts. We're pleased to add jazz to the Museum's artistic menu.

The versatile Ira Sullivan, born in Washington, D.C., in 1931, is accomplished on brasses, reeds, and drums. As a member of the house band at The Bee Hive in Chicago, he played with such greats as Sonny Stitt, Wardell Gray, Lester Young, and Charlie Parker. His discography numbers over thirty albums from the early 1950s to last year, including early recordings with Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers, J.R. Monterose, and Red Rodney. The five-time Grammy nominee has led and co-led such groups as the Bakers Dozen and Strings Attached.

Fame has come late in life to Von Freeman. Born into a jazz-loving family in Chicago in 1922, Freeman drew himself a moustache to look older than twelve for his first nightclub gig. He is on the long list of jazz stars, from Nat King Cole to Johnny Griffin, influenced by the legendary DuSable High School music instructor Capt. Walter Dyett. In the late 1940s, Freeman and his brothers backed Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, and Lester Young as house band at the Pershing Hotel; he also played in the band at Club DeLisa. He has toured internationally but favors the Apartment Lounge and other neighborhood clubs around Chicago. He has recorded about twenty albums, including a recent double-CD set on the Steeplechase label.

Clevelander Ernie Krivda's professional career began in 1963 with the Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra. He has played in the bands of two Cleveland legends--organist Eddie Baccus and guitarist Bill de Arango. As leader of the house band at the Smiling Dog Saloon, he shared the stage with Chick Corea, Elvin Jones, Herbie Hancock, and many others, and has toured and recorded with Quincy Jones. Krivda originated the concept of **Thunder from the Heartland** as

part of the Northeast Ohio Jazz Society's planning process for a grant from the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest National Jazz Service Organization; he is serving as the series' artistic director.

 Composer Andrew Homzy was born in Toledo, Ohio, in 1945. He received his Bachelor of Music degree in music theory at Baldwin-Wallace College, Berea, Ohio, and his Master of Musical Arts degree in musicology at McGill University, Montreal. As associate professor of music at Concordia University in Montreal, Quebec, since 1976, he has taught jazz arranging, composition, and history, among other music courses. He is known for his research on Duke Ellington, Billy Strayhorn, Charles Mingus and Francy Boland. He leads the Andrew Homzy Jazz Orchestra, specializing in extended suites by great jazz composers, and other professional and student ensembles including the Concordia Jazz Guitar Orchestra and The Concordia Vintage Jazz Band. His own music is heavily influenced by Ellington and Mingus.

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Drummer Randy Gelispie is a Kent, Ohio, resident born in Akron, Ohio. He has played with Ace Carter and Joe Alexander, has toured with Wes Montgomery, Sonny Stitt, and Tommy Flanagan, and has performed with Nancy Wilson, Lou Donaldson, Joe Williams and Abby Lincoln. He lived in Detroit for many years, where he was the city's first call drummer.

Bassist Jeff Halsey is director of jazz studies at Bowling Green State University. A Michigan native, Halsey has toured Europe and the U.S., performing with such artists as Tommy Flanagan, Jimmy Forrest, Clark Terry, Jay McShann, J.C. Heard, Dizzy Gillespie, and Stanley Cowell. He has recorded with Ernie Krivda's Cleveland Jazz All Stars, and J.C. Heard.

Cleveland native Joe Hunter's formal training includes jazz and classical performance and composition studies at Cleveland State University. His interest in world music and culture has taken him to Brazil twice in the early 1980s, while at home he has performed with Ernie Krivda, Kenny Davis, Howie Smith, Neil Creque, Claudio Roditti, and other well-known artists, as well as with his own groups. A Columbus, Ohio, resident since 1987, he has recorded and toured with alto saxophonist Vince Andrews' groups, and can also be heard on Ernie Krivda's latest CD, *Krivda Jazz*. He leads The Corner Pocket Trio, an acoustic piano trio, and Yumbambe, an eight-piece Latin-jazz band. He teaches jazz piano at the Conservatory of Music at Capital University.

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Tickets for this and the other concerts at the Museum are \$7; the Tri-C concert ticket price is \$15; a package of tickets for all four concerts is \$25. Tickets are available at the Museum Store and Wax Stacks (on Lee Road in Cleveland Heights), or by phone with a credit card by calling 216/397-9900. Seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis; doors open at 7 pm. Parking is free at both locations. All four concerts will be recorded digitally for national distribution.

Upcoming concerts in the series:

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NOJS

Diversity in the Tradition

March 19/The Cleveland Museum of Art's Gartner Auditorium

Marion Hayden (bass), Holly Hoffman (flute), Roger Humphries (drums), Tim Price (reeds), and Jim Cooper (vibes) play mainstream jazz out of the bebop tradition, colored by innovative instrumentation and arrangements. Featured composer is Ernie Krivda.

NOJS Great Lakes Big Band, joined by The Leaders

April 16/Tri-C Metro Auditorium

The Leaders is this decade's "supergroup," made up of six of the greatest performers and innovators in modern jazz: Lester Bowie (trumpet), Kirk Lightsey (piano), Chico Freeman (tenor sax), Arthur Blythe (alto sax), Don Moye (drums), and Cecil McBee (bass). The Big Band showcases eighteen of the finest composers, performers, and arrangers in the region. This concert is part of the 1993 Tri-C JazzFest.

Piano Connection

June 25/The Cleveland Museum of Art's Gartner Auditorium

Three diverse masters bring their unique stylings to an evening of piano jazz; special guests will perform with each trio: Johnny O'Neal (piano), Roger Hine (bass), Val Kent (drums), with vocalist Paula Owen; Bill Dobbins (piano), Bill Plavan (bass), Mark Gonder (drums), with Eddie Morgan (trombone); Neal Creque (piano), Paul Samuels (drums), Chink Stevenson (bass), with Howie Smith (reeds).

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